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ABSTRACT

At Millersville University (Pennsylvania), business German is taught in the German section in a two-semester introduction at the sophomore level, a junior-level advanced course, and a senior-level translation course. These four courses are augmented by introductions to business and economics, both taught in English outside the German section. Short supply of adequate textbooks often requires in-house preparation of materials. In the sophomore course, for example, a collection of graphs, readings, business statistics, and geographical sketches based on data from three German publications provide an introduction to all of the important trends in contemporary German business. Areas of study for the two-semester course include international business, German foreign trade, the German government, the domestic German economy, and the German consumer. The lessons proceed from the broadest topic, international trade, to the most basic element, the consumer, and each lesson consists of a graph and its text, a story problem, a reading, vocabulary lists, text- and vocabulary-related questions, grammar points and drill, and business statistics. Class activities based on the lessons include written and oral questions-and-answers, reading aloud, translation, and vocabulary drills. A true-or-false test based on the texts is administered each day. The lesson structure allows for both theoretical work and exposure to specific, current trends. (MSE)

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AN INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS GERMAN

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BUSINESS GERMAN - Dr. Robert Ambacher

In the summer of 1980, I was fortunate to find myself once again in the Federal Republic and in the company of two dozen other American teachers of German. During an extended conversation with one of these ~~teachers~~ Germanists, Dr. Richard Whitcomb of Illinois State University, I discovered a man with a mission: Business German. "We need to respond to altered realities in our discipline," Dr. Whitcomb said, "we need to provide our students with skills they can employ in the real world." German and the real world - what would Dr. Adolf, my guide to the universe of Goethe's poetry, have to say about Business German? Indeed, what would Goethe himself say? What could the world of classical Weimar, the centerpiece of my education in German, have to do with the "Ruhrgebiet?"

Further conversation with Professor Whitcomb, in Germany, on our return flight to the United States and during a one-week seminar he held later at Illinois State, proved to be most revealing. Goethe, I was reminded, was the driving force behind the Ilmenau mining project, a fact that is noted by Friedenthal in his masterful biography ~~of Goethe~~:

> This mining project is Goethe's greatest practical scheme; he devotes himself to it for tens of years, enthusiastically and at the cost of great effort....He busies himself with silver tests and ore-hammers.... The journies Goethe undertakes over the next few years to the Harz mountains have as their objective, visits to the still flourishing mines and smelting houses. (Friedenthal, P. 188)

Perhaps the distance between this part of Weimar and the "Ruhrgebiet" is not so very great after all. In the broadest context, mining still is mining. And German still is German.

If we believe that a liberal arts education is of great value in preparing people with the skills and insights necessary to pursue a broad range of interests and occupations, [illegible], then we should be able to adapt to changing circumstances in teaching, as well as in life. Most of us have faced the task of applying our liberal arts skills to the teaching of civilization, a discipline for which we also were not specifically prepared and for which, at least in German, no totally adequate text is available. Is business so very different?

Although I am not an expert in economics, I can and do read the newspapers in which business graphs are to be found. And it is not economics that I presently am reading and teaching, it is Business German, the employment of the German language for the exchange of information concerning German business in its domestic and foreign environments. This is an area of teaching which offers rewards as great and as real as the traditional disciplines of German and which has become, in today's world, a national and an international imperative.

The basic goals of Business German, as taught by the traditionally educated teacher at both the college and the high school level, are: 1) the employment and development of the four traditional skills and the fifth skill of translation; 2) the introduction to the vocabulary of business in German; and 3) the introduction to the basic concepts of business, as transmitted in the German language.

Within the framework of our program at Millersville, this relatively new discipline is taught in the German section in a two-semester introduction on the sophomore level, an advanced course on the junior level and a translation course on the senior level. These four courses are augmented by an introduction to busi-

ness and an introduction to economics, both taught in English, outside of the German section.

Since textbooks which we would consider to be adequate ~~do not exist~~ ARE IN VERY SHORT SUPPLY, we often must prepare our own materials. In the lesson and related pages I have distributed here, we are concerned with the above-mentioned two-semester introduction to Business German on the sophomore level in college, which would correspond to the third or the fourth year in high school.

In the past five years, I have developed an integrated collection of graphs, readings, business statistics, and geographical sketches based on "Die Zeit," Tatsachen über Deutschland and Der Volksbrockhaus. This material can be prepared by any teacher and can be utilized either for a complete one- or two-semester course, or for any lesser number of individual units integrated into the traditional reading course. Everything here has been employed, tested and proven effective in the classroom.

Central to this course is "Die Zeit," which in any given year publishes some thirty business graphs which range from one-, two- and three-year cycles to five-, ten- and fifteen-year periods. These graphs, when collected and organized, provide a student with the basic introduction to all of the important trends in contem-

porary German business. For my own two-semester course for German and Business majors, I have divided these graphs into five major areas:

1. International Business.
2. German Foreign Trade.
3. The German Government.
4. The Domestic German Economy.
5. The German Consumer.

Pursuing this orderly development allows my students to proceed from the broadest of business concerns to the most basic and most principal business figure, the individual consumer, the sum of whose choices ultimately determines the market. This pursuit gives my students that same introductory knowledge possessed by a business-man who subscribes to "Die Zeit."

Each lesson consists of:

1. A Graph and its Text.
2. A Vocabulary List.
3. Ten Questions.

4. A "Zeitraffer."
5. A Vocabulary List.
6. Five Questions.

7. A Grammar Introduction

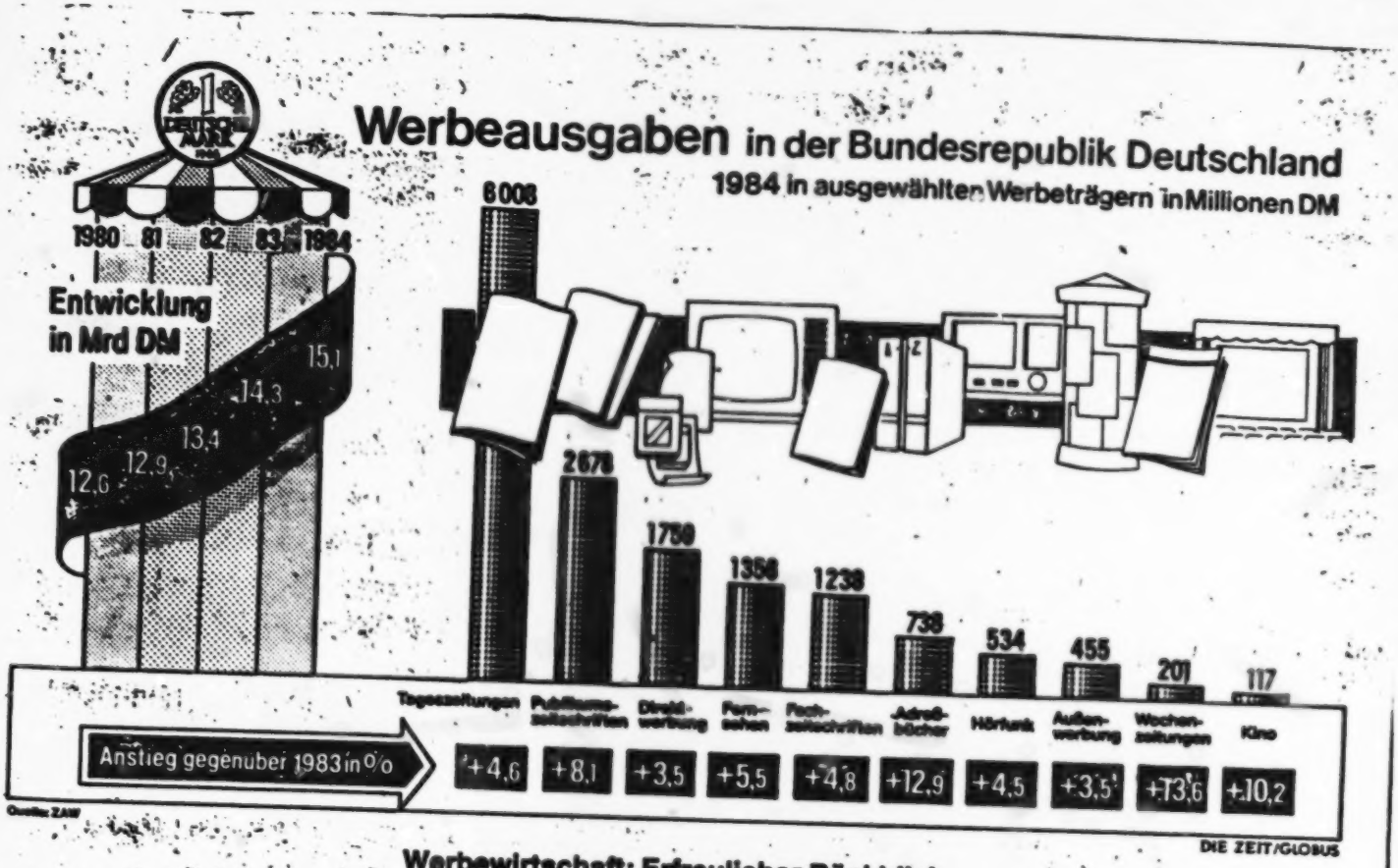
8. A Grammar Drill.

9. A Set of Business Statistics.

10. A Reading.

11. A Vocabulary List.

12. Five Questions.



Werbewirtschaft: Erfreulicher Rückblick

Auf zwei höchst erfreuliche Jahre kann die Werbewirtschaft zurückblicken: 1984 kletterten die Werbeaufwendungen um 5,7 Prozent auf über 15 Milliarden Mark, nachdem schon 1983 ein Plus von 6,4 Prozent erzielt worden war. Nach Angaben des Zentralausschusses der Werbewirtschaft (ZAW) hätte das Plus im vergangenen Jahr noch um einen Prozentpunkt höher ausfallen können, wenn nicht der lange Streik in der Druckindustrie gewesen wäre. Einheitlich positiv war die Entwicklung an den Werbemärkten nicht: Während Branchen wie Sparkassen und Banken, Möbelhersteller, Textilindustrie, Kosmetik und Nahrungsmittel sowie die Massenmedien selbst ihre Werbeetats kräftig erhöhten, gab es Kürzungen bei Handel, Waschmitteln und Zigaretten, Putz- und Reinigungsmitteln.

2. Werbeausgaben 1984 (17. Mai 1985)

werben - to advertise
die Ausgabe - expenditure
ausgewählt - selected
der Werbeträger - advertising medium
die Entwicklung - development
der Anstieg - increase
die Zeitschrift - magazine
die Werbung - advertising
der Hörfunk - radio
die Wirtschaft - economy
erfreulich - encouraging
der Rückblick - review
blicken - to look
klettern - to climb
die Aufwendung - expenditure
erzielen - to realize
nach Angabe - according to
der Ausschuß - committee
höher ausfallen - to turn out better
der Druck - pressure, printing
einheitlich - uniformly
die Sparkasse - savings bank
der Hersteller - producer
die Nahrungsmittel - (pl) food
der Etat - budget
die Kürzung - reduction
der Handel - trade
die Reinigungsmittel - (pl) detergent

3. Werbeausgaben 1984 (17. Mai 1985)

1. Welche Tendenz gab es 1983 und 1984 in der deutschen Werbewirtschaft?
2. Wodurch wurde 1984 ein besseres Ergebnis verhindert?
3. In welchem Bereich wird am meisten für Werbung ausgegeben?
4. Wo wurden die höchsten Zuwachsraten erzielt?
5. Was ist Direktwerbung?
6. Was versteht man unter Außenwerbung?
7. War die Entwicklung auf dem deutschen Werbemarkt einheitlich?
8. Welche Wirtschaftsbranchen investierten weniger in Werbung als früher?
9. Warum müssen die Werbeausgaben im Hörfunk mit mehr als einer halben Milliarde Mark überraschen?
10. Welche Gründe kann es für die geringen Ausgaben in der Kinowerbung geben?

4. Zeitraffer: 22. Februar 1985

Um sechs Prozent auf insgesamt 10,3 Milliarden Mark sind 1984 die Werbeaufwendungen in der Bundesrepublik gestiegen. Nach einer Übersicht der Werbestatistikfirma Schmidt und Pohlmann haben die Publikumszeitschriften ihren Anteil auf 41,9 Prozent erhöht. Die Tageszeitungen hatten leichte Einbußen von 30,6 auf 29,3 Prozent.

5. insgesamt - altogether
werben - to advertise
die Aufwendung - expenditure
steigen - to rise
die Übersicht - survey, review
die Zeitschrift - magazine
der Anteil - share
die Einbuße - loss

6. Zeitraffer: 22. Februar 1985

1. Wie stark stiegen die Werbeausgaben in der BRD 1984?
2. Wieviel wurde insgesamt für Werbezwecke ausgegeben?
3. In welches Medium wird prozentual am meisten investiert?
4. Welchen Anteil am Gesamtbeitrag hatten die Tageszeitungen?
5. Publikumszeitschriften und Tageszeitungen erreichen zusammen einen Anteil von mehr als 70% der gesamten Werbeaufwendungen. In welche andere Medien werden die restlichen 30% investiert?

7. Da-Compounds

da-compounds are employed to avoid a repetition of a prepositional phrase

in these compounds the pronoun-object is replaced by da (it), which is then prefixed to the preposition

if the preposition begins with a vowel, an r is added to connect the da

Die Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands ist ein wichtiges Thema. Ich denke oft daran.

in this sentence the da in daran is a substitute for "die Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands"

The reunification of Germany is an important topic. I often think about it.

in the event that the pronoun-object of the preposition is a living being, da-compounds are not employed

Helmut ist ein guter Freund. Ich denke oft an ihn.

in this sentence the preposition and its pronoun-object remain unchanged

Helmut is a good friend. I often think about him.

8. rewrite the following sentences, replacing the prepositional phrase with a da-compound or a preposition plus its pronoun-object

1. Die Westeuropäer müssen sich auf einen Rückgang des Sozialprodukts einstellen.
2. Bei den Norwegern schlägt das Nordseeöl zu Buche.
3. Die staatliche Strukturpolitik bemüht sich hier um die Ansiedlung neuer Industriezweige.
4. An der Spitze der Ausfuhrgüter der Bundesrepublik stehen Maschinen aller Art.
5. Seit etwa 1960 wurde der Anstieg hauptsächlich durch die ausländische Arbeitnehmer bewirkt.

9. Wirtschaftsgeographie: Die elf Länder

Land: Hessen

Fläche in Tsdqkm: 21,11

Einwohner in Mio: 5,54

Hauptstadt: Wiesbaden

Großstädte: Frankfurt (6), Wiesbaden (21)

Ballungsgebiete: Frankfurt-Wiesbaden-Bad Homburg

Industrie und Handel

Messen

Viehzucht

Ackerbau

Obst- und Weinbau

Forstwirtschaft

Verkehrsknotenpunkt Frankfurt

10. **Die Presse - I**

Ob die Straßenverkaufsblätter neue Leserschichten für die Zeitung gewonnen haben, läßt sich nicht eindeutig nachweisen. Jedenfalls haben sie die Abonnementsblätter nicht verdrängt: Drei von vier verkauften Zeitungen werden noch immer im Abonnement bezogen. Die Straßenverkaufszeitung wird zum großen Teil als Zweitzeitung gekauft.

Die zwei wichtigsten überregionalen Abonnementszeitungen sind „Die Welt" (konservativ) und die „Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung" (konservativ-liberal). Überregionale publizistische Geltung haben auch die „Süddeutsche Zeitung" (liberal) und die „Frankfurter Rundschau" (linksliberal).

11. die Leserschicht - group of readers
eindeutig - clearly
nachweisen - to prove
jedenfalls - in any case
das Abonnement - subscription
verdrängen - to dislodge
im Abonnement beziehen - to subscribe to
die Geltung - recognition

12. Die Presse - I

1. Auf welche Weise erreichen die meisten Zeitungen ihre Leser?
2. Was bedeutet das (1) für den Straßenverkauf?
3. Was sind die „wichtigsten" überregionalen Zeitungen, die im Abonnement bezogen werden?
4. Welche anderen Tageszeitungen werden bundesweit gerne gelesen?
5. Welche Vorteile bieten überregionale Zeitungen gegenüber lokalen Blättern?

The initial graph and related items (1-3) introduce a major area of business: the "Zeitraffer" (4-6) and the final reading (10-12) reinforce this initial graph. The "Zeitraffer," which also comes from "Die Zeit," focuses on a momentary phase of business. The final reading, which is drawn from Tatsachen über Deutschland, considers the area of business under review from a more theoretical and more general vantage point. Viewed in this way, the student is presented with a short-, medium- and long-range introduction. The vocabulary lists which accompany these readings are based on Pfeffer's Basic (Spoken) German Dictionary for Everyday Usage (Grundstufe.) Since the graphs and "Zeitraffer" are replaced periodically, each vocabulary list is inclusive. This basic core of each lesson lends itself not only to the posing of questions and the recording of answers, both written and oral, but also to reading aloud, translating the text and drilling vocabulary in both directions.

In each lesson I focus on one specific grammatical point. German majors at Millersville have intensive grammar reviews in the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth semesters: they are well drilled. Business majors, however, need a clear and precise, no-frills treatment of grammar. If the individual teacher would employ one or two of these lessons within the framework of a reading course, or if that teacher would have no business students, then he could dispense with these grammatical introductions and employ a standard review grammar.

The sets of business statistics, drawn from all three of my sources, deal not only with statistics, but also with geography and other topics. This material updates and expands ~~on~~ topics treated in the readings or supplies information not introduced elsewhere: the eleven "Länder," their capitals, major cities and products, etc.; the nations of a particular continent, their languages, inhabitant names, etc.; the major agricultural products of the Federal Republic; the growing and declining areas of retail trade, and so on.

In order to ensure that students work on and are prepared for each individual lesson, I require them to focus on the three readings by giving them a true-and-false test each day, ~~consisting~~ comprised of three questions from the graph, one question from the "Zeitraffer" and one question from the

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concluding reading. Since each lesson presents the student with totally new concepts, I ask him at this point to have only a passive knowledge of the basic facts. In the four major tests in each semester, however, I do demand that a student possess an active knowledge of the graphs with which we have dealt; these graphs, after all, are the centerpiece of our study. Since tne "Zeitraffer" deal with relatively brief trends, they are not dealt with in the major tests. The concluding readings, being more theoretical in nature, continue to be passively judged. The grammar is considered in a traditional manner. For the sets of statistics and related material, I require a knowledge of the most striking details noted in our everyday classroom treatment.

This relatively new discipline presents our students with difficult material. During my brief investigation in this field I have concluded, however, that students will work diligently to meet clearly-defined, short-range goals, no matter how difficult the assignments might seem at first. If the student is supplied with basic vocabulary lists for business terms with which he otherwise would not be acquainted, he will be willing to tackle the new world of business in German and he will be able to master this new world as well.